The Chinese Collections in Canada: A Review of their Development and Status in Academic Libraries

Ng Tung-king

After a faltering start in the 1920s, Chinese collections in Canadian institutions of higher learning expanded steadily since the 1960s. Their development in the past few years, however, has been affected by the general financial constraints, and is now continuing within the limits of available funds. In this review an attempt is made to present a general appraisal of their development in the past half century, with a fuller report on the two largest collections. Without facilities for interviewing the responsible persons and inspecting the collections themselves, the information regarding their present status is largely based on a questionnaire. Under these circumstances, this is presented with awareness that it is neither comprehensive nor a survey in depth. However, it is hoped that the result of this effort could serve as a guide to the Chinese language resources for sinological studies in Canada. If, through information of this review, strengths and weaknesses could be identified and future development could be planned for Chinese libraries in this country, the purpose of this article would have been achieved.

History and Development

Catering to academic needs, the systematic development of library resources at higher educational institutions usually follows the trend of study and research. Discussion of the former invariably involves the latter. In Canada, Chinese studies dated from 1931. The development may be divided into two stages. In the pre-war years, first attempts at provision of Chinese study programmes by two of the oldest universities were shortlived, though both had access to a very fine Chinese collection of their own (The Gest Chinese Research Library at McGill University and the Mu

1 McGill University, Calendar for the Session 1931-1932 (Montreal, 1931), p. 178; Calendar 1932-1933, pp. 129-150, 451; Calendar 1933-1934, pp. 125, 410.
Hsüeh-hsün 禮學勤 Collection at the University of Toronto) at the time. The post-war years witnessed a greater success of the second attempts. Chinese or East Asian programmes initiated between 1946 and 1960 continued expanding, and more new ones have been introduced in the decades that followed.

Concentrating on traditional studies of language, literature, history, geography, philosophy, religion and art, pre-war programmes required support from substantial resources in the Chinese language. Since World War II, the shift of interests to the modern period and contemporary scene has brought about changes of programmes. Courses were initiated in the study of social sciences, so new and current imprints in economics, politics, anthropology and sociology began to appear among post-war library acquisitions. In some cases, the availability of Western language material and translations on these subjects seemed to provide adequate support to contemporary Chinese studies, and the need for large holdings in Chinese was reduced, sometimes to the minimum.

When Kiang Kang-hu 黃克勤 started instruction in Chinese language, literature, history, religion, philosophy, and art at McGill University in 1931, the first important collection of traditional works in Chinese had already been deposited at the University’s Redpath Library for five years. Both the programme and the library unfortunately came to an abrupt end in 1934 and 1937 respectively. The library, founded by Guion Moore Gest and his adviser Commander I.V. Gillis, was formally opened on February 13, 1926, as The Gest Chinese Research Library. As a strong support to the University’s Chinese programme, it was introduced as one of the finest of its kind in the world and it offered excellent opportunities for study and research. Despite its immense value, it changed hands in 1937 and became the most outstanding part of the East Asian Library of Princeton University. Since then no attempt has again been made at McGill to acquire another Chinese collection of that size (75,000 volumes at the time of transfer) and stature (including 41,195 volumes of collector’s pieces).

The University of Toronto was the next to offer courses in Chinese studies, which did not start until 1942 and lasted only till 1944. A decade earlier, the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto was already known for its sizable Chinese archaeological collection, to which another scholarly Chinese collection of 50,000 volumes (the Mu Collection) was added in 1935. Built up by Mr. Mu Hsüeh-hsün

---

4 University of Toronto, Calendar, Faculty of Arts, 1942-1943 (Toronto, 1942), p. 140; Calendar 1943-1944, p. 149.
(1880-1929). Chinese Secretary to the German Legation in Peking, over a period of twenty five years, the Mu Collection was considered the third largest university collection of Chinese books in North America at the time, surpassed only by the Gest Library at McGill and the Harvard-Yenching Library. It contained some Sung and Yuan, plus a large number of Ming and early Ch'ing editions. From 1933 to 1955, while the collection was still remaining in Peking for cataloguing under the supervision of Commander I.V. Gillis (who used the same system as he had designed for the Gest Library), about 10,000 volumes of gazetteers of Shantung and Honan provinces and modern publications on art and archaeology were added to it. In addition, the collection contained some 5,000 rubbings of stone inscriptions and carvings of monuments collected by Bishop White, Anglican Bishop of Honan, who was instrumental in the successful acquisition of the collection. The Library was formally opened in November 1937. However, all this had little immediate impact on Chinese studies in the University of Toronto until 1942, when courses in Chinese culture, history, geography, art and archaeology were announced, offering Archaeology of China as the first and foremost course, and promising Ph.D. candidates full use of the collections in the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology.  

Regrettably Toronto's effort in maintaining a Chinese programme was just as shortlived as the first attempt at McGill.

After World War II, a great interest was aroused in area studies, especially studies of East Asia and the Soviet Union. More Canadian institutions entered the East Asian field, offering more diverse courses of study and research. The University of British Columbia, for instance, started in 1949 courses in language, history and culture of China and Japan. Norman A.M. MacKenzie, President of the University, described that programme as "one of our most important post-war developments."  

By 1956, some courses conducted in the Departments of Anthropology, Geography, and History were accepted for credit as courses in Asian Studies. Other departments, such as Fine Arts, International Studies and Political Science, joined this multidisciplinary Asian Studies programme in 1959. In the same year, an important traditional Chinese collection of 45,000 volumes (the P'u-pan Chinese Library 漢坡書樓) was acquired to start the Asian Studies Library. Acquired from Macao (from its owner Mr. Yao Chün-shih 焦紹石) with generous donations from the Friends of the Library group, this collection contained about 115 volumes from the Sung and Yuan dynasties (960-1368), 3,326 from the Ming (1368-1644), 9,855 from

---

5 University of Toronto, Calendar, School of Graduate Studies, 1942-1943, p. 43; Calendar, Arts, 1942-1943, p. 146.
7 University of British Columbia, Calendar, 42 Session, 1956-1957, p. 76.
8 University of British Columbia, Calendar, 43 Session, 1959-1960, p. 92.
9 University of British Columbia, The Report of the University Librarian to the Senate, 44th year, September 1958 to August 1959, p. 8.
the early Ch'ing (1644-1820), and the remainder from the Modern period (1820- ). Of more than 300 manuscripts, the oldest was dated 1426, and some remained unpublished. It was said to be one of the five most important collections on the continent at the time of receipt, and that, with other expanding resources in Chinese and Japanese in the Library, it would bring scholars of distinction to the University.

Since its formal establishment in 1961, the Department of Asian Studies expanded rapidly and steadily. Today it offers a wide selection of courses at both graduate and undergraduate levels, most of which are in the study of Chinese language, literature, geography, history, civilization, archaeology, fine art, philosophy, religions, economics and political thoughts, while the rest concerns Japan, India and Southeast Asia. As mentioned, some of the courses are provided in conjunction with other disciplines in the Departments of Anthropology, Economics, Fine Arts, Linguistics, Political Science and Religious Studies.

Along the same academic trends the Asian Studies Library developed systematically. To the P'u-pan Collection, approximately 20,000 volumes of modern imprints in Chinese and Japanese, plus 5,200 volumes in English (the former Institute of Pacific Relations Library, New York) were added by 1961. Two years later, the whole English section was transferred from Asian Studies to integrate with the University Library. With a small Chinese and Japanese book budget, annual acquisitions between 1961 and 1964 were approximately 3,450 volumes only. Purchases of large sets and expensive items had to rely on special grants and donations.

In 1965, from Mr. H.R. MacMillan came the largest donation ever received by the University Library, an allocation which not only increased holdings greatly but also doubled the regular staff of the Asian Studies Library from three to six. With this special fund, the following material in Chinese was acquired in Hong Kong by the head of the Library on an acquisition trip: The Ching-i Chai Collection of 4,000 volumes of traditional works to supplement the P'u-pan Collection, including many early Ch'ing and a few Ming editions; the Sung Hsüeh-p'eng Collection of 500 volumes, including some gazetteers of Kwangtung and books on language and education; over a thousand titles of modern literary works; and many back-files of periodicals published between 1910 and 1960. These activities brought the Chinese collection to a total of 86,500 volumes, constituting 84% of the grand total of 103,000 volumes in 1967.

The Chinese collection of the Asian Studies Library was further enriched by

---

11 University of British Columbia, The Report of the University Librarian to the Senate, 46th year, September 1960 to August 1961, p. 3.
12 Ibid., p. 2.
other donations. In 1972, Mr. Harry L. Chin 見野華 donated $10,000 (later increased to $20,000) to the Library for material of Chinese culture for a five-year (later extended to a ten-year) period on an instalment basis. With this many titles of Chinese genealogy, catalogues of East Asian libraries, back issues of Peking journals which had been suspended in 1966, and Taiwan reprint series were purchased. Another donation of $75,000 from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 1974 greatly strengthened holdings in three areas: Korea, Northeast China and Taiwan, during their Japanese occupation period, though the research material acquired was in social sciences and mainly in the Japanese language. With a smaller allocation from the Mellon grant, back files of important Chinese journals on education and expensive titles on archaeology were acquired in support of research programmes of the time. From private sources, collections ranging from 100 to 2,300 volumes were donated to the Library. In 1966 and 1967, two Chinese private collections were received from Mr. Charles K.C. Lowe 吳克倫 and Mr. and Mrs. Tong Louie 廖玉榮先生夫妇, admirably supplementing Chinese holdings in Buddhist literature and philosophical and literary works of the 1912-1965 period. Mr. and Mrs. Louie donated the collection of the late Mr. Seto More 門政雄, Mrs. Louie's father. Comprising 1,100 titles in 2,300 volumes, the Seto collection represents the largest private collection received as a gift. By 1980, the Library has developed into a multilingual collection of 252,800 volumes of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tibetan, Vietnamese and Indic material of a comprehensive range of subjects, the largest portion of which (158,083 volumes) being in Chinese. The long delayed completion of the Asian Centre in 1981 has finally brought all three units of Asian studies (the Department, the Library and the Institute of Asian Research) together under one roof, forming a very strong presence of Asian activities on the University of British Columbia campus and the West Coast or the Pacific Rim of Canada.

Both Toronto and McGill revived their Chinese programmes after World War II. Starting with a M.A. degree course in 1949, Toronto soon developed it into a full graduate and undergraduate programme including courses in the language, literature, history, culture, religion, philosophy, art and archaeology of China. Following the change of academic interest, a modern China programme was developed in the 1960s. By 1974, a Joint Centre on Modern East Asia was founded by the Universities of Toronto and York to promote study of East Asia at those two sponsoring institutions as well as other schools and universities in Ontario. Originally

---

15 Of the total, 158,083 are in Chinese, 61,623 in Japanese, 1,519 in Korean, 2,982 in Tibetan, 101 in Vietnamese, and 21,000 in Indic languages. These figures are taken from the Asian Studies Library's accession records of June 30, 1981.
16 University of Toronto, Calendar, School of Graduate Studies, 1949-1950, p. 66; Calendar, Arts, 1951-1952, pp. 158-159.
the programme concerned China only, but it has now been broadened to include Japan.\textsuperscript{17} Presently the University of Toronto's Asian programme alone comprises over sixty courses in various aspects of the study of China, Japan, Korea and India, with emphasis on China.

In the same period, the Chinese collection of Toronto grew steadily along a parallel line of development of Chinese studies at the University. A great number of periodicals, reference works and ts'ung-shu (collectanea) were acquired in the 1950s. Most importantly in 1961 the Mu Collection with the exception of the 5,000 rubbings and works in art and archaeology, was transferred from the Royal Ontario Museum and integrated with the University's Chinese library. This newly formed collection of 60,000 volumes was named the Department of East Asiatic Studies Library of the University of Toronto,\textsuperscript{18} whose operations became an integral part of the University Library system. Thereafter current imprints and reprints from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan needed to support the programmes were added with substantially increased annual library allocation. The rapidly expanded Modern China Programme directly resulted in strengthening the Chinese collection. In particular, grants were provided for developing the modern Chinese section. In four decades, the nature of the library was gradually changed from a traditional Chinese scholar's collection to a modern working research collection, and its holdings have been doubled, to a total of 132,363 volumes in Chinese, Japanese and Korcan material as of June, 1980.\textsuperscript{19} Of this total, 68,483 volumes are in Chinese.

McGill did not resume its Chinese programme until 1963, when only a moderate history course was offered.\textsuperscript{20} In 1968, the Centre for East Asian Studies was established to develop and co-ordinate the study and research at the University.\textsuperscript{21} Four years later an interdisciplinary programme was provided, focussing on China and Japan, including about twenty courses listed in two categories: those in language and literature under the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures, and those in other disciplines given in the Departments of Anthropology, Economics, History, etc.\textsuperscript{22} Following the same pattern, almost thirty courses are offered in 1981. Despite these activities, it was reported in July, 1970, that there was "virtually no

\textsuperscript{18} Chu and Uyenaka, 550.
\textsuperscript{22} McGill University, \textit{Calendar}, 1972-1973, p. 25.
Chinese material" in the library. Faculty and students of Chinese study relied on a collection of approximately 8,500 volumes in Western languages on China (which claimed the largest portion of 56%). Japan and Korea. A modest collection in Chinese of works on modern and contemporary China has been developed in the 1970s, but all titles included in it have been integrated with the Western language material, and no separate statistics are available for them.

Besides British Columbia, Toronto and McGill, about thirteen other universities entered the field of Asian studies in the 1960s, followed by six more in the next decade. Some of them were of a sporadic or intermittent nature. In 1981, thirteen of them are still continuing with their Asian studies programmes. They offer a variety of courses on one or more Asian countries, usually with China in the lead. Amongst these, only four (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Victoria and Windsor) have a sizable Asian language collection integrated with their respective main libraries. The first three of them are in Chinese and Japanese, while the last one, which used to be mostly in Hindi, has gradually expanded between 1971 and 1978 to include a basic working collection of about 5,000 volumes in Chinese. Besides general reference works, Windsor now has in its possession some important Tsung-shu (Ssu-pu pei-yao 四部備要), material on religion (Ta-ts'ang ching 大藏經, Tao-ts'ang 道藏), on history (the dynastic histories), the classics (Shih-san ching 三綸) and modern literature (works of modern writers such as Lu Hsün 蘆迅, Pa-chin 巴金). The largest holdings are in modern literature.

Victoria's (Victoria, B.C.) Chinese/East Asian collection was initiated to support the interdisciplinary Pacific Studies Programme approved by the University Senate in 1969. A decade later, the Centre for Pacific and Oriental Studies was established with a staff of five, three of whom were teachers of Chinese language and culture. At present, though the largest concentration of Asianists is in the Centre, yet about 35 courses related to Asia are offered by the Departments of History, Geography, Anthropology, Economics, History in Art, and Philosophy. The holdings of about 2,000 volumes (including bound journals) related to Asia are almost entirely in Western languages, about half of which is in the area of history. Since 1969, the Chinese/East Asian collection has grown to approximately 4,400 volumes, including a fine collection of about 2,000 volumes of Chinese books and

---

29 Daniel Bryant's letter to Ng Tung-king.
pamphlets donated by Mr. Ch'en T'ieh-fan 陳鶴凡. The Ch'en Collection is strongest in classics, archaeology, and next in Chinese language, literature and art. Support from these Chinese/East Asian and Western language library resources seems adequate for the Chinese programme in language, literature, history, thought and culture.

In 1970, Saskatchewan and Alberta reported to have an estimate total of 2,000 and 1,000 volumes in Chinese respectively. The former's annual addition of Chinese books was given as two hundred volumes, while the latter was just beginning to expand its Asian holdings in Chinese and Japanese history. The majority of Alberta's growing collection in these areas was said to have been acquired as background material rather than as a collection in itself. By 1981, Alberta reported that a new department of East Asian Studies had just been established. Furthermore, other departments also had a long-term interest in East Asian studies, so some initiatives for more systematic collection development were expected.28

Besides those mentioned, other institutions which offered Chinese/East Asian programmes do not acquire any vernacular material. For instance, Brock's Chinese/East Asian collections are restricted to basic, generalized holdings in Western languages to support five courses on East Asia given by the Departments of History, Philosophy and Politics, because its Asian Studies programme concentrates on South Asia. Concordia is another example: Its holdings of 2,100 volumes which provide support to courses in Chinese history are also entirely in Western languages.

To these institutions the need of substantial vernacular library resources is far less than those which have started their programmes with the classics. This phenomenon was largely due to the characteristics of contemporary area studies,29 which were interdisciplinary in nature, and required programmes to be formulated by several departments dealing with language and literature in the humanities, history, anthropology and geography in social sciences. Knowing the difficulties of integrating such programmes with existing departmental arrangements, and that any attempt to make specific areas themselves one department's prerogative could only be an incomplete solution, scholars tried a new approach of establishing separate centres or institutes, where expertise from interested departments could be pooled together to provide co-ordinated courses on the given areas. The Asian Centre at British Columbia, the East Asian Centre at McGill, and the Joint Centre on Modern East Asia in Toronto are fruits of such an effort. The utilization of this new approach has set a new trend for East Asian library development which is extending further into the social science disciplines, acquiring more contemporary publications, and relying not only on the vernacular but also Western language materials.

The Major Collections

As briefly mentioned, the Universities of Toronto and British Columbia have each built up a considerable collection of traditional, modern and contemporary publications in Chinese, representing the largest libraries of the kind, and supporting the most active and varied Chinese study programmes in Canada.

1. The University of Toronto’s Mu Hsiuh-hsün Collection represents the most outstanding part of the East Asian Library, providing 371 rare titles in 4,182 volumes and materials for traditional and classical studies and research of China. About one-fifth of the rare titles are manuscript copies, such as the San-ch’ao yao-luen 三朝要典, compiled by Ku Ping-ch’ien 魯秉遠 (1550-1629) a kind of white paper compiled under the influence of the notorious eunuch Wei Chung-hsien 魏忠賢 (1568-1627) to support his anti-Tung-lin 丁林 policy, and was prohibited in the Ch’ing period and the anonymous work, Sung Ming ping-chih pei-lan 楊明兵志備覽, which has never been published, is an original draft copy of the detailed study of the military systems of the Sung and Ming dynasties. The early imprints include a 1417 edition of the Shen-seng chuan 神僧傳, compiled by the Ming Emperor Ch’eng-ts’u 明成祖 (1360-1424), containing biographical sketches of 208 Buddhist monks.

The East Asian Library is strong in ts’ung-shu, history, gazetteers and literature. Most of the 174 sets of ts’ung-shu were acquired by Professor W.A.C.H. Dobson on an acquisition trip to the Far East. In the history section, holdings on the ancient and dynasties up to the Republican period are quite adequate, while those on the modern and contemporary periods have been strengthened through an active acquisition policy for reprints and micro-editions. The 1,161 gazetteers in the library further strengthen this section. In the well covered fields of language and literature, holdings are especially strong in modern studies of Chinese language, history of literature, classics, medieval and modern literature, with emphasis in Ming and Ch’ing novels, drama and folk literature.

Social sciences were identified as weak areas, but since 1969, following the advice of a library consultant, a major effort has been made to rectify the situation by acquiring over 3,500 titles in this field. Archaeology and fine arts, however, are not the library’s prime concerns because the Far Eastern Department Library of the Royal Ontario Museum, which is within walking distance of the library, is quite rich in material on these subjects.

The strength of the periodical collection of 608 Chinese titles lies in learned and literary journals. Beginning in 1967, a collection of micro-editions has been built up at the rate of approximately 300 reels per year. Of the total of 2,762 reels of

50 Chu and Uyemaka, 551-554.
microfilm and microfiche (each box of microfiche is counted as one reel), about 85% or 2,348 are in Chinese.

As a summary of its growth between 1959 and June, 1980, relevant total holdings of the library are gathered from reports on various surveys of East Asian library resources in America, conducted by Dr. Tsien Tsuen-hsüin 錢存訓 of the University of Chicago, as follows:32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Micro-</th>
<th>Current</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>65,953</td>
<td>14,941</td>
<td></td>
<td>80,894</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>83,500</td>
<td>28,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>111,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>60,316</td>
<td>43,946</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>104,308</td>
<td>6,984</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>68,488</td>
<td>65,571</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>132,363</td>
<td>8,404</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The University of British Columbia Chinese collection started with 45,000 volumes of traditional works mostly in the humanities and developed into a library of 158,000 volumes with a broadened scope to include also social sciences and studies of modern societies. Chronologically, periods from the ancient to the modern and contemporary are quite evenly and adequately covered. The outstanding Pu-pan Collection provides an excellent coverage of works published before 1912. Besides its 320 rare editions and manuscripts, other valuable items include the gazetteers, the classics, resources on history, ts'ung-shu, and individual works by scholars of the Ch'ing period.33

The emphasis on works pertaining to Kwangtung is much in evidence throughout the Pu-pan Collection. That was because both former owners were from that province. The core of the Pu-pan was originally a part of the Nan-chou shu-lou 南州書樓, a library owned by Hsü Shao-ch'i 徐紹棨 (1879-1948),34 a professor of Chinese literature and bibliography, at one time curator of the Kwangtung Provincial Library, and one of the three most renowned bibliophiles of South China. He


33 Wang Yi-t'ung 王乙同, A Descriptive Catalogue of Valuable Manuscripts and Rare Books from China (Part I) Issued during the Sung, Yuan and Ming Dynasties (960-1644) in the Library of the University of British Columbia: Being the Pu-pan Collection Brought together by Yao Chün-shih of Macao (Vancouver B.C., 1959, mimeographed).

34 Hsü Shao-ch'i (Hsin-fu 徐紹棨 (信符), Kuang-tung ts'ung-shu chi-shih shih 廣東藏書紀事詩 (Hongkong, 1963), p. 121.
concentrated his book-collecting on records, documents, gazetteers and literature of his native province. Some of these have never been published, and are still among the large section of the collection that was transferred to the Yao Family during World War II. Mr. Yao Chün-shih then augmented it with material of quality based on the same policy with emphasis on Kwangtung oriented publications, to build up his new Pu-pan Collection.

Rare items of the Pu-pan include a 986 edition of the Shuo-wen wu-yin yün-p'u 諧文五音韻譜 (Notes on phonetics of the Shuo-wen), once owned by Pao Ting-po 魏廷博 (1728-1814), a renowned bibliophile; a 1473 edition of the Chang Ch'i-chiang chi 楚曲江集 (Complete works of Chang Chiu-ling 張九齡 [673-740]), which was the original borrowed for photographic reproduction purposes in the compilation of the famous Shuo-pu t'sung-k'an 四部叢刊; and the Shuo-wen sheng-t'ung 諧文聲統 (Phonetic system of the Shuo-wen), by Ch'en Li 陳澧 (1810-1882), a famous Kwangtung scholar. The last title was not published until Ch'en Chih-mai 陳之藻 (1908-1978), great grandson of Ch'en Li, identified the presumably lost manuscript from the Pu-pan catalogue and borrowed its photocopy for publication in 1971.

The Chinese collection of the Asian Studies Library has aimed at a balanced coverage of various fields of research with history as the core. Materials both current and retrospective, especially post-1912 imprints, have been acquired to supplement the Pu-pan. For transitional textual studies, sometimes several editions were made available. On modern history, official documents such as Ch'ou-pan t'ung shih-mo 首善文稿 (a compilation of documents of the Grand Secretariat of foreign affairs), its supplements, and the Ch'ing-tai shih tzu-tao 近代史料 (Modern historical resources) are provided together with historical societies' publications and commercial series that are rich in biographies, diaries, memoirs, memorials and private notes of historical figures in modern China. Auxiliary materials were also collected: (1) Periodicals published in the late Ch'ing and early Republican periods, which are considered invaluable documents for historical study; (2) Source material on a particular movement or event; (3) Archaeological finds of recent years; (4) the gazetteers, and (5) the biographical works. Wherever needed materials were not available in book-form, microfilm and/or microfiche editions were acquired. There are 3,436 reels of microfilm and 6,986 units of microfiche (each fiche is counted as one unit) in the Library, most of which are in Chinese.

Acquisitions of basic works and back files of journals since the mid-1960s have built up the social sciences holdings to a highly adequate level. Among them there

---


36 Shen Yün-lung 沈雲龍, "Chiu hua ai kuo shu-sheng t'ai shih"追憶愛國書生大儒─陳之藻先生, Chuan-chi wen-hsüeh 傳記文學, 84 (1979), 54-56.
are works on economic history of different periods from Western Han to the
Republic, the World War II, the five-year plan and the four-modernization years,
plus works on specific economic aspects such as railways, the Maritime Customs and
rural development. For source material on political and social history from Tang to
Ch’ing periods, there are the Shih t’ung (A collection of ten works classed
together for those governing the country), the Hsü-yao (Collected major in-
formation) and the Ch’ing-shih wen (Material for statecraft), which covers the
Ming, Ch’ing and early Republic, while the Cheng-fu hung-pao (government
gazette) covers the post-1912 periods.

The Library is strong in materials on both traditional and modern studies of
the Chinese language. On etymology, there are several old and valuable editions of
the Shuo- wen chieh-tsu (the first etymological dictionary) and some eighty
titles concerning this book in the Pu-pan alone. The Pu-pan also rich in works on
all aspects of chia-shih 石壁, especially inscriptions on metal and stone objects plus
oracle bones, the so-called chia-ku wen 甲骨文, from all of which the etymological
development can be traced. For studies of Chinese language reform and transliteration,
the Library is well stocked.

The number of writings in Chinese literature is enormous, but they are very
well represented in the Library, together with many bibliographies and other
reference guides. The Pu-pan provides block print and other old editions for a large
number of basic, traditional works of the pre-Republic periods, strongly supported
by modern critical writings as well as reprints with annotations and commentaries.
Collections of individual works of poetry and essays of a single or several periods
usually are found in two or more editions in the Library. Eighty percent of the in-
dividual literary works from Han to Ch’ing recommended in the Shu mu ta- wen
複書目索 (A comprehensive bibliography for Chinese research) are available. The
Pu-pan alone supplies 1,260 individual works. About 850 were by Ch’ing scholars,
many of whom were from Kwangtung.

On modern literature, library holdings actually cover all periods from the early
"new literature movement", the pre-1949 to the post-1949 years as well as the 1980s,
containing collections of representative works published in each period. The im-
portance of this section also lies in the numerous works of over a thousand modern and
contemporary Chinese writers published since 1912, representing creative works by
leading authors such as Lu Hsün (1881-1936), Pa-chin (1905- ), Chang Ai-ling
張愛玲 and Pai Hsien-yung 白先勇 (1937- ). The Library is particularly well stock-
ed in traditional and modern drama. For the latter, approximately 650 titles on the
Peking, Shanghai, Cantonese and other regional operas have been collected. There

57 Chang Chih-tung 張之洞, Shu mu ta- wen 書目索 (Shanghai, 1934); Shu-mu ta- wen pu-
cheng 書目索編補正, enlarged and revised by Fan Hai-tsing 范希聲 (Peking, 1965).
is also a considerable number of works on shuo-ch'ang literature (a genre of popular entertainment consisting mainly of talking and singing).

A summary of the growth of the Asian Studies Library from 1965 to 1980 is given below.58

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>Korean</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Microform</th>
<th>Current Periodicals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>74,730</td>
<td>11,844</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>86,674</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>112,550</td>
<td>34,121</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>147,683</td>
<td>662</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>157,038</td>
<td>45,500</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>185,585</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>154,597</td>
<td>59,361</td>
<td>1,390</td>
<td>215,350</td>
<td>8,727</td>
<td>528</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Collections Today

According to the report of a 1962 survey, British Columbia and Toronto were the only Canadian universities that had entered the field of East Asian studies, each with a collection particularly strong in history but neither was yet fully adequate for advanced research in literature.59 In 1981, fifteen Canadian universities are offering courses in East Asian studies, but between them there are only six Chinese collections, with British Columbia and Toronto still far in the lead. The four new collections are those at Windsor, Victoria (Victoria, B.C.), Alberta and Saskatchewan. Geographically there is a concentration of Chinese resources in the east and west of Canada in and around Toronto and Vancouver. The great distance between these research centres with almost nothing of the kind in between makes duplication of basic research material unavoidable and necessary.

In many ways the Chinese collections of British Columbia and Toronto are similar. Their holdings may vary in quantity, but essentially they are alike in quality. They have been developing along the same academic trends, beginning with a fine, large collection of traditional and scholarly works, which could effectively support most, if not all, aspects of classical and traditional study and research. Following the shift in academic interests they gradually broadened their scope to include social sciences and study on modern and contemporary societies. The development was reflected in their acquisition plans, which helped increase their holdings in social sciences up to the level that was required to support prevailing study and research programmes.

58 The figures are taken from the same group of reports of surveys conducted by Dr. Tsien as previously used for the Toronto collection summary. British Columbia's statistics are unavailable for 1959 because the Asian Studies Library was not officially established until December, 1960, and it was not included in Dr. Tsien's 1959 survey.
Both libraries are strongest in history. The official histories are supplemented by excellent auxiliary materials such as reports and studies on archaeology, biographies, early periodicals, gazetteers, collectanea and special collections on specific social movements. With very rich resources in the Royal Ontario Museum close by, Toronto could offer Ph.D. programmes in archaeology and fine arts from the beginning, while Vancouver had to build up its collection around materials in the P'u-pan Collection to the required strength before courses in archaeology could be offered in 1973, which were followed closely by the initiation of a Ph.D. programme. Graduate study of Asian arts is conducted in the Department of Fine Arts in British Columbia, with support not only from the Chinese but also from the rich resources in Japanese and Western languages. Generally strong though it is in history, the British Columbia collection is inadequate in a few auxiliaries, and one of which is genealogy. While gazetteers are local histories of a region, a place, genealogical works are private histories of a family, a clan, and both are equally important to historical research of a culture or society. The state of inadequacy in which materials in literature were found in 1962 has been greatly improved by 1981, so much so that M.A. and Ph.D. degrees are offered in Chinese literature by both British Columbia and Toronto.

It is generally more difficult to select materials on contemporary societies than for classical periods. The latter might have been extensive, but were identifiable, while there are no clearly defined boundaries for the former. 40 For social sciences, which normally require the accumulation of a critical mass of research materials such as complete files of learned journals, newspapers, surveys and reports, the difficulty of selecting materials on the contemporary would be doubled. This is especially true in times of tightened budgets. The development in the areas of social sciences of the two major libraries might have experienced and suffered from the same problems.

Another problem area is found in periodicals. As one of the fifteen largest East Asian collections in North America, British Columbia has the smallest number of current periodical subscriptions (a total of 528, of which 265 are Chinese), 41 so small that nine of the largest collections have a total that more than doubles it. The *quid pro quo* system which has been imposed in recent years on new subscriptions due to tightened budgets of the University has prevented effective remedial actions. During the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1977, almost all periodicals were suspended, and practically no new ones were produced from China. Just when the tide turned, bringing forth an amazing number of new titles, the Library was experiencing difficulties of fiscal constraints. Furthermore, most of the learned journals started publication

---

40 Tsien and Winger, p. 9.
The Chinese Collections in Canada

since 1977 were for domestic circulation only. Book dealers outside China kept a watchful eye on those brought out by travellers, grabbed whatever numbers they could and sold photo-copies of them at extortionary prices. Through international exchange with the National Library of Peking, approximately thirty periodicals in social sciences and a small number of monographs are obtainable, but they constitute only a small fraction of the increasing number of new titles. Gradually more and more periodicals from China have been made available for subscription, but according to the latest announcements, their prices would be doubled or tripled as from 1982. Though it started with a large collection of older periodicals, Toronto is not faring much better with current titles either, since its holdings total only 509 (number of titles in Chinese among them is unavailable).

Among the four minor collections, Victoria and Windsor have made great progress in the past decade, each trying to keep pace with the development of the field of Chinese studies. With the concentration of Asianists in their Centre for Pacific and Oriental Studies and the receipt of the Ch'en Tien-san Collection, Victoria should have a very bright future. This prediction is based on the British Columbia experience, according to which, it took the zealous presentation of the librarian, the farsightedness of the president, the generous support from the Keener Foundation and Friends of the Library Group, and the enthusiastic support of the Chinese professors to procure and Pu-p'an Collection, and to lay the foundation for an excellent collection, greatly strengthening the expanding programme of East Asian Studies in the University. Similarly Alberta may experience a much better development in the near future, now that a new Department of East Asian Studies is established.

Despite some areas of weakness, the Chinese collections in Canada, major and minor, have been developing quite satisfactorily. They have met requirements of various fields of study. In some cases, their great strength has paved the way for the initiation of new research programmes. These achievements do not mean that they have met few or no difficulties along the way. On the contrary, besides the universal fiscal constraints, they have problems of their own. Situated in an English/French speaking environment, the best status they can enjoy is that of a special collection of a rather unique nature. Unlike special collections of, for instance, nineteenth century English literature or Japanese maps of the Tokugawa period, whose boundaries are clearly defined with limitation of expansion, the Chinese collections are living and growing units with almost limitless expansion, and they are expected by scholars in the country to provide adequate support to their expanding programmes. They should, by all means, continue with their development. The acquisition of a Ch'en, a Mu, or a Pu-p'an Collection represents only the beginning, not the end of the developing process.

---

For their continuing expansion Chinese materials must be included in the
general library planning of acquisition, processing, housing, servicing and staffing.
The characteristics of the Chinese language, especially its non-roman scripts,
however, have created many problems for the inclusion. In organization, for example,
should a Chinese collection be treated as (1) an area collection where all
materials concerning China, regardless of language and discipline, should go, or (2)
a special language collection where only materials written in Chinese should be? Furth-
ermore, should it be integrated with the main library or separated? If the latter
were in favour, should it be a unit by itself or should it be amalgamated with other
Asian or East Asian language materials as an Asian or East Asian branch or division?
Should the knowledgeable staff be concentrated in a branch or division responsible
for all activities concerning Chinese materials or should they be scattered in different
processing and servicing departments, following the general library administrative
pattern?

The problems of processing are just as great as those of organizing Chinese
materials. In this age of automation and rapidly rising costs, and in the midst of
the expensive and time consuming conversion from card to micro-catalogues and
machine readable records, there is a tendency to leave Chinese materials behind in
the march of progress towards automation. In the opinion of library experts,
however, this should be avoided. Instead, development plans for Chinese/East Asian
libraries should be based on assumptions and approaches that are consistent with the
general direction in which the Canadian research library mainstream is moving and
the nature of the environment in which libraries may expect to operate in the
foreseeable future.\(^{43}\) All this points to one basic principle, include Chinese/East
Asian materials in all current library planning, be it a national project of an
automated bibliographic system, or a regional programme for a union list of serials.
Both British Columbia and Toronto are using UTAS (University of Toronto Library
Automation System) for their catalogue records now, and fortunately at this point,
Chinese/East Asian materials which were catalogued since 1980 and 1974 respective-
ly are included in them in romanized forms. Once the system for computerization of
the non-roman Chinese scripts is generally available and adoptable, which may
become a fact by 1983, Chinese materials could be included in compatible machine
readable records in the full form of their original scripts. It would then be possible to
compile an automated bibliographic record of Chinese monographs, serials and/or
microforms in Canada, making such resources commonly accessible to scholars in
the country.

It is essential for Chinese research collections in Canada to have a commonly

---

\(^{43}\) Steering Committee for a Study of the Problems of East Asian Libraries, "East Asian
(Fall and Winter 1977-1978), 1-9.
accessible automated bibliographic record for the following reasons. Book funds from their own institutions are very limited, and prospects for fiscal support from educational and cultural organizations are on the decline, while costs of acquiring, processing, housing, serving and preserving library materials are rapidly rising. It is impossible for individual institutions to continue expanding or even maintaining their research collections and services without any outside assistance or relief devices. As prospects for outside assistance look very dim, research libraries must look for devices to share the costs and their resources. To achieve this, what would be more effective than a comprehensive data base that would include bibliographic records of all research collections, and make them readily available to interested scholars? Judging by the fact that card catalogues are being replaced by records in microforms or machine readable forms now, and bibliographic information for all research materials, including the Chinese, are being entered in a data base, eventually shared computer systems would be the answer to the above problems.

Conclusion

If the performance of the Chinese collections in Canadian academic libraries were evaluated by their ability to meet the needs of prevalent study and research programmes alone, a slightly above average rating would be appropriate. However, developing along parallel lines, an interaction exists between the fields of study and the library. When the former advances more rapidly, the latter would have to catch up with it by building up adequate resources to provide the needed support. When the collection takes the lead, sometimes the great strength of the resources would attract sufficient attention of scholars in the field to initiate a course of study in that discipline. In other words, meeting demands from the fields is important but not all that the collections could do to encourage and accelerate development of the fields of study. Within the prevalent trend or guidelines, the libraries could and should take the initiative to strengthen resources in neglected subject areas when opportunity arises. In this respect, the Chinese collections apparently leave something to be desired. Evidently inadequacy had already set in even before the mid-1970s, when inflation and devaluation of the dollar on one hand and rapidly rising costs on the other started the collections on a trend of decline. If not prevented, the situation would certainly deteriorate and would be detrimental not only to the collections themselves but also to scholars throughout the country, whose teaching and research are dependent upon the ready access to a continually growing resource base.

At this critical stage, cooperation (in acquisition and processing) seems to be the key to success for planning future development of the Chinese collections. Due to the advanced state of automated librarianship, shared computer systems can, as indicated above, provide solutions to various library problems, and processing, or mainly cataloguing, of East Asian materials is one of them. Since 1987, when romanization and cataloguing rules for East Asian (Chinese, Japanese and Korean)
materials were standardized, many libraries in North America have been relying on
cards, and later, MARC tapes from the Library of Congress to relieve a considerable
portion of the costs and burden of cataloguing East Asian vernacular materials. In
return, they reported to the Library of Congress bibliographic records of titles which
they had catalogued themselves but the Library of Congress had not yet acquired or
prepared cards or tapes for. In 1979, the Library of Congress and the Research
Libraries Group executed a Memorandum of Understanding, by which they com-
mitted themselves to the joint development and use of the capacity of RLIN
(Research Libraries Information Network) to enter, store, maintain, search, display
and output bibliographic records composed in whole or in part of East Asian script
data.44 By mid-1981, it was expected that beginning sometime in 1983, East Asian
collections of Research Libraries Group member institutions and the Library of Con-
gress would execute all new cataloguing for Chinese, Japanese and Korean publica-
tions on-line in RLIN, and that their full records (including vernacular script data for
author, title, imprint and notes) would be accessible via special RLIN terminals.
In
the new environment of automated processing, the Library of Congress will therefore
still be relied upon for relieving part of the task of cataloguing of East Asian
materials. British Columbia and Toronto should now be prepared to adapt their on-
line systems and avail themselves of the services that are going to be offered by the
Library of Congress in 1983. Once they have gained access to the full vernacular
records of new acquisitions, at least half of the problems in processing current East
Asian materials would have been removed.

As regards retrospective conversion of bibliographic records of East Asian
materials in Canada, the procedure should begin with the three files already in fully
romanized machine readable form, that is, the post-1973 acquisitions of Toronto,
the post-1979 acquisitions of British Columbia, and the latter's East Asian serials
holdings. All it needs to complete the conversion of these files is to add only the ver-
nacular data to the existing records. The completed data of the major East Asian
collections would then form the best and most cost-efficient basis for continuing with
the procedure. This line of activities is suggested with an ultimate goal that its im-
plementation would lead to the national bibliographic control of retrospective East
Asian materials in Canada.

The great distance between the two major Chinese collections in Canada
prevents them from receiving any benefit from the type of inter-institutional coopera-
tion similar to that enjoyed by pairs of geographically proximate institutions such as
the University of California at Berkeley and the Hoover Institution at Stanford.45

44 Joint Advisory Committee to the East Asian Library Program. Automation, Cooperation and
Scholarship: East Asian Libraries in the 1980s. Final Report of the Joint Advisory Committee to
Another model of cooperative acquisition is found in the purchasing scheme that was developed in 1974 by the Japan Library Group in Great Britain. Under this scheme, participating libraries undertake to maintain regular levels of purchase and to buy all major works published in their areas of interest. The book selectors from individual libraries meet regularly and check their book purchases against a Japanese book trade bibliography. Significant titles not ordered by any library are then ordered centrally and allocated to the library specializing in that particular field. These additional purchases are paid for centrally by a grant from the Japan Foundation Endowment (Tanaka). Various safeguards are built into the system so that a library cannot renege on its obligations and still expect its purchases to be paid for centrally. This was considered a good scheme and may now be copied for acquisition of material for the Chinese collections in Canada, using (Hong Kong) Joint Publishing Co.'s Stock list of books from China or the book lists of China National Publishing Industry Trading Co., Peking, as a guide, with the necessary fiscal support from a central source such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

ESSAYS IN COMMEMORATION OF 
THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OF 
THE FUNG PING SHAN LIBRARY 
(1932-1982) 

STUDIES IN CHINESE LIBRARIANSHIP 
LITERATURE, LANGUAGE, HISTORY AND ARTS 

Edited by 
Chan Ping-leung 
Lai Shu-tim, Yeung Kwok-hung 
Wong Tak-wai 
Lee Ngok, Chiu Ling-yeong 

Published under the auspices of Sir Kenneth Fung by the Fung Ping Shan 
Library of the University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Rd., Hong Kong 1982